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Work-related injuries

People who experienced a work-related injury or illness, including type of injury, job details and work-related injury rates

Reference period July 2017 - June 2018

Released 30/10/2018

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Key statistics

- 563,600 people had a work-related injury or illness (4.2% of people who worked at some time during the year).
- The most common cause of injury or illness was 'Lifting, pushing, pulling or bending' (24.2%).
- 60% had time off as a result of the injury or illness.
- 27% received workers compensation for the injury or illness.

Overview

Of the 13.4 million persons who had worked at some time in the last 12 months, 4.2% (563,600) experienced their most recent work-related injury or illness during that same period.

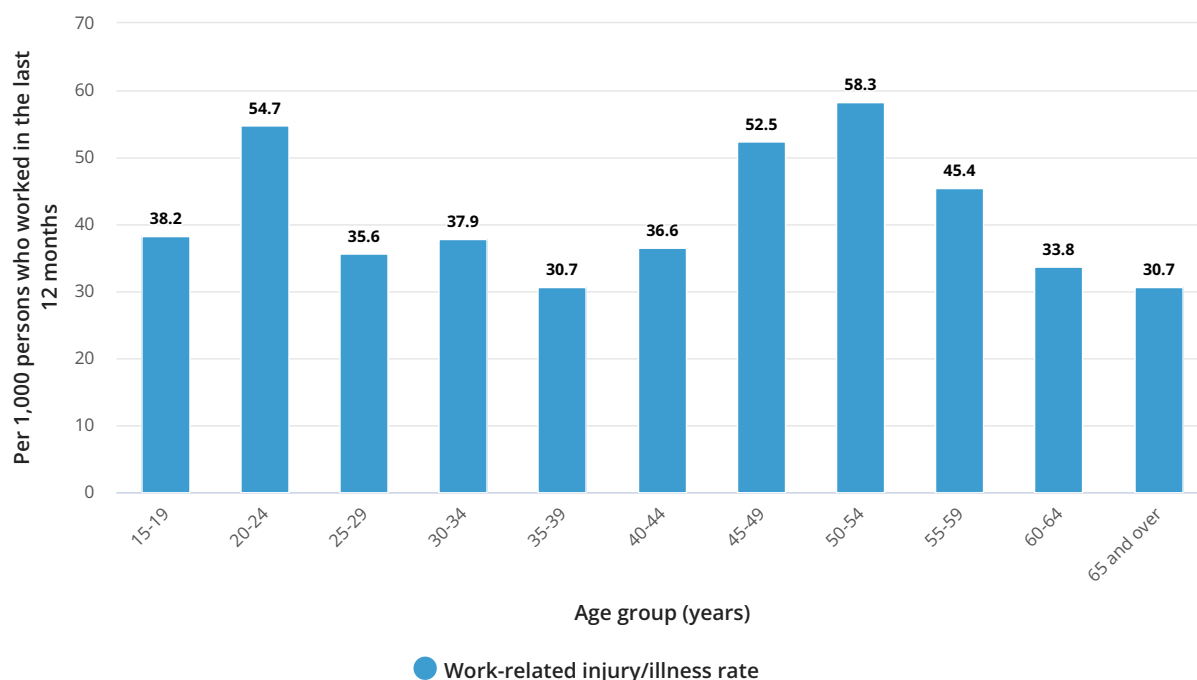
Of the 4.2% of those who experienced a work-related injury or illness in 2017-18:

- approximately 84% continued to work in the job where their injury or illness occurred;
- approximately 7% had changed jobs; and
- 9% were not employed in the reference week (Table 1).

More than half of the people who experienced a work-related injury or illness were men (54.4%). In 2017-18, 4.3% of males who worked in the last 12 months experienced a work-related injury or illness, down from 4.9% in 2013-14. However, the proportion of females who experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months increased from 3.6% in 2013-14 to 4.0% in 2017-18 (Tables 1 and 2).

The highest work-related injury or illness rate occurred in the 50-54 year age group with 58 per 1000 persons who had worked at some time in the last 12 months, followed by the 20-24 year age group with 55 per 1000 persons (up from 41 per 1000 persons in 2013-14) (Table 2).

Graph 1: Work-related injury/illness rate, by age group (years)



Details of the job where the work-related injury or illness occurred

Of the 563,600 persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness in 2017-18:

- 87% (489,400) were employees, of which 76% (372,300) had paid leave entitlements;
- 10% (55,900) were owner managers of unincorporated enterprises; and
- 3% (17,900) were owner managers of incorporated enterprises.

61% (345,500) of people who experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months were working full-time and 27% (150,600) were working under shift arrangements (Table 3).

Occupation and industry where work-related injury or illness occurred

Technicians and trades workers and Community and personal service workers were the occupation groups with the highest rates of people who experienced a work-related injury or illness (72 per 1000 employed persons and 69 per 1000 persons respectively). These were followed by Machinery operators and drivers and Labourers (57 per 1000 employed persons) (Table 4).

Construction was the industry with the highest work-related injury or illness (59 per 1000 employed persons). This was followed closely by Manufacturing (58 per 1000 employed persons) and Health care and social assistance (55 per 1000 employed persons) (Table 4).

The industries in 2017-18 with the lowest rates of work-related injuries or illnesses were the same as 2013-14:

- Financial and insurance services (15 per 1000 employed persons);
- Professional, scientific and technical services (22 per 1000 employed persons); and
- Rental, hiring and real estate services (24 per 1000 persons) (Table 4).

Of the 306,800 males who experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months:

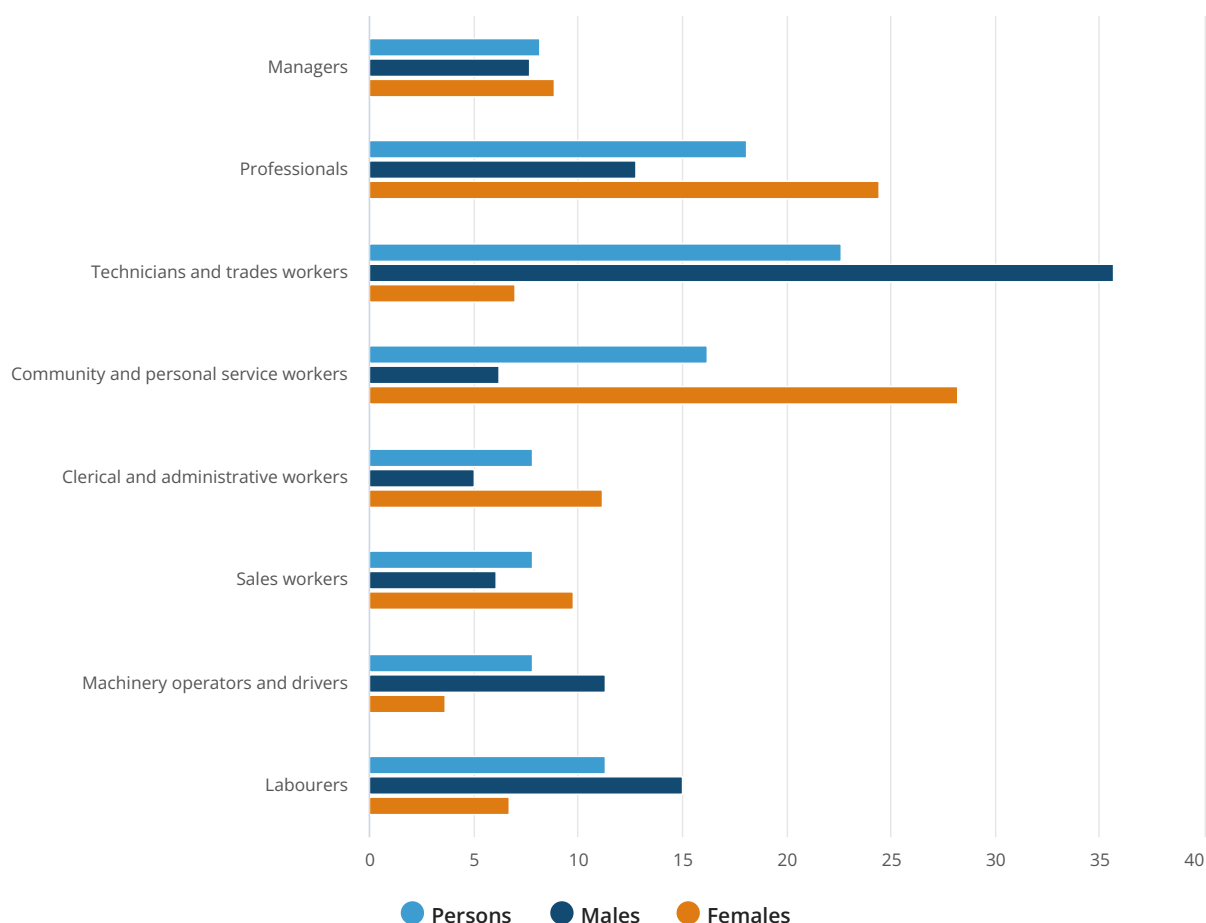
- 36% were Technicians and trades workers;
- 13% were Professionals;
- 11% were Machinery operators and drivers; and
- 15% were Labourers when the injury or illness occurred.

Industry-wise, 21% were employed in Construction, 12% in Manufacturing and 10% in Retail trade when the injury or illness occurred (Table 4).

There were 256,800 females who experienced work related injuries or illnesses, of which:

- 28% were Community and personal service workers and 24% were Professionals when the injury or illness occurred; and
- 29% were employed in the Health care and social assistance industry, 15% in Education and training and 13% in Retail trade when the injury or illness occurred (Table 4).

Graph 2: Share of people who experienced a work-related injury or illness, by occupation groups and sex



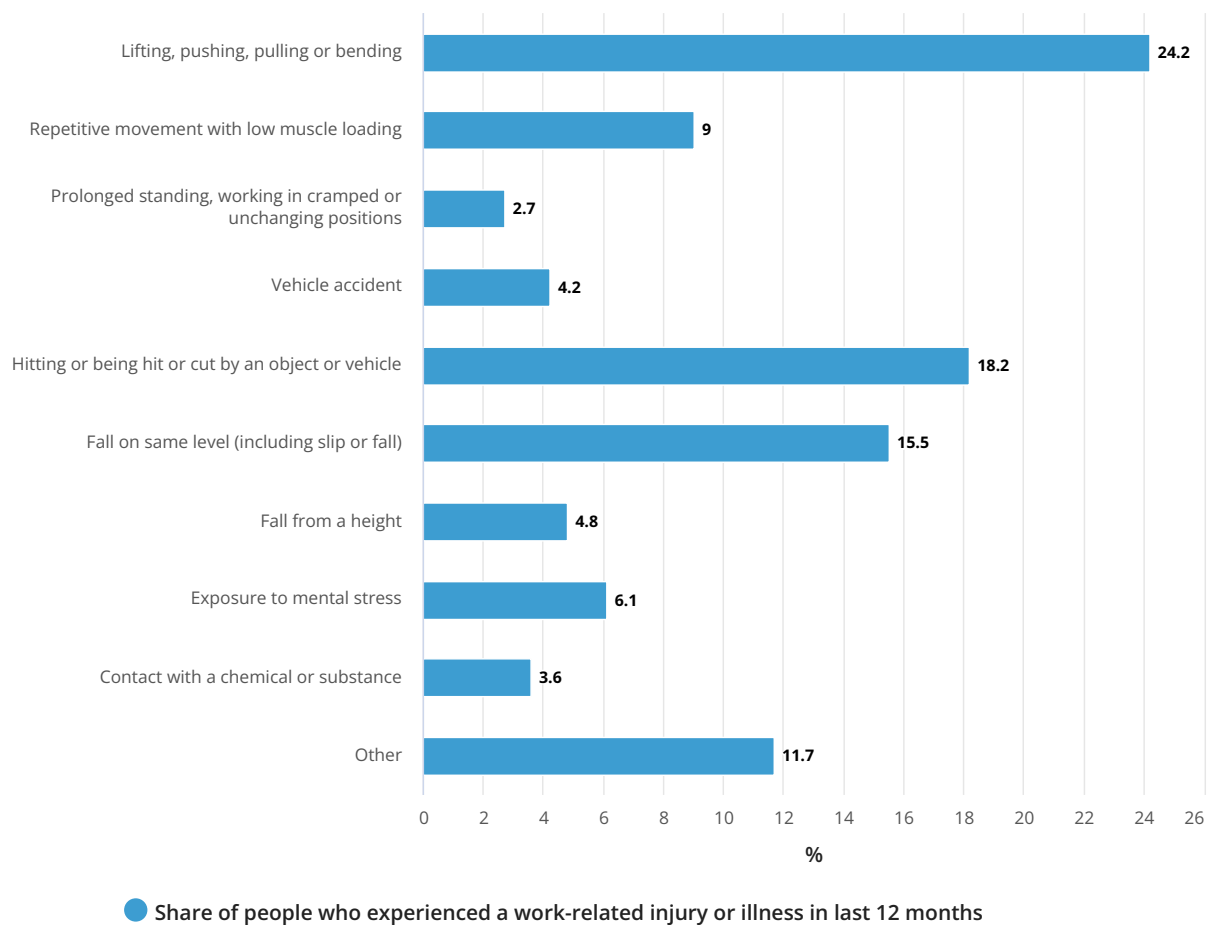
Most recent work-related injury or illness sustained

The most common types of injuries or illnesses sustained remained the same in 2017-18. Sprain/strain was the most common injury sustained (28%), followed by Chronic joint or muscle condition (18%) and Cut/open wound (16%) (Table 5).

In 2017-18, Lifting, pushing, pulling or bending was still the most common way persons

experienced their work related injury or illness, with 24% of people reporting it. This was followed by Hitting or being hit or cut by an object or vehicle (18%) and through a Fall on same level (including slip or fall) (15%) (Table 5).

Graph 3: People who experienced a work-related injury or illness, by how most recent work-related injury or illness occurred



Sources of financial assistance

Of the 563,600 persons who experienced a work-related injury in the last 12 months, over

half (53%) received some sort of financial assistance. Of those who received financial assistance, 52% received workers compensation, 45% did not apply for workers compensation and 3% applied for and did not receive workers compensation (Table 10).

The number of people who did not receive financial assistance has increased from 39% in 2013-14 to 47% in 2017-18 (Table 10).

The number of persons who received workers compensation as a proportion of the total number of people who experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months has dropped from 35% (183,200) in 2013-14 to 27% (154,300) in 2017-18 (Table 5).

Of the 389,300 people who did not apply for workers compensation, approximately 43% reported that the main reason for not applying for workers compensation was that they had a Minor injury only/not considered necessary, 13% were Not covered or not aware of workers compensation and 9% said they did not think they were eligible for workers compensation (Table 10).

There were 489,400 employees who experienced a work-related injury or illness in the last 12 months. Of the 372,300 employed persons who had paid leave entitlements, approximately 67% received financial assistance, compared to 29% of the 117,100 employed persons without paid leave entitlements (Table 12).

Absences

Of the 563,600 persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness:

- 60% had some time off work. Of these:
 - 11% took off part of a day or shift;
 - 42% took one to four days off;
 - 16% took five to ten days off;
 - 26% took 11 or more days off; and
 - 6% had not returned to work since the injury or illness occurred (Table 5).
- 221,500 persons did not have any time off work. Of these
 - 28% sustained a Sprain/strain;
 - 20% sustained a Cut/open wound; and
 - 15% sustained a Chronic joint or muscle condition (Table 6).
- 16% were no longer working in the job in which the work-related injury or illness occurred. Of these:
 - 30% left as a result of the workplace illness or injury (Table 13).

Reported work-related injury or illness to someone in the

workplace

Approximately 87% (493,100) of persons who experienced a work-related injury reported it to someone in the workplace. The majority (76%) of those persons reported their work-related injury or illness to their Supervisor/Line manager (72% of males and 79% of females), followed by 16% reported to their Health and safety representative (19% of males and 12% of females) and 15% reported to their Employer (18% of males and 13% of females) (Table 5).

A person may report their most recent work-related injury or illness to more than one person in their work place.

Data downloads

WRI 2017 - 18 Data item list

[↓ Download XLS](#)
[147 KB]

Table 1. Persons who worked at some time in the last 12 months, whether experienced a work-related injury or illness in current job or previous job–by sex, 2005–06, 2009–10, 2013–14 and 2017–18

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[185 KB]

Table 2. Persons who worked at some time in the last 12 months, selected characteristics–by whether experienced a work-related injury or illness

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Table 3. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, details of job where most recent work-related injury or illness occurred–by sex

Data Cube Table 3: This replacement spreadsheet corrects errors in the estimation and proportion of Hours usually worked in job where most recent work-related injury or illness occurred by sex, reported in rows 17 to 25.

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Table 4. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, and all employed persons, occupation, industry and sector of job–by sex

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[216.5 KB]

Table 5. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, selected details about the most recent work-related injury or illness–by sex

[!\[\]\(a3ea015cc5581cad732d1eb81613fe7b_img.jpg\) Download XLS](#)

[\[221.5 KB\]](#)

Table 6. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, days or shifts absent due to most recent work-related injury or illness–by selected characteristics

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[\[234.5 KB\]](#)

Table 7. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, reported most recent work-related injury or illness to someone in the work place–by selected characteristics

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[\[196 KB\]](#)

Table 8. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, job where most recent work-related injury or illness occurred and selected characteristics–by whether received workers' compensation

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[\[208.5 KB\]](#)

Table 9. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, details of most recent work-related injury or illness–by whether received workers' compensation

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[\[198 KB\]](#)

Table 10. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, main reason did not apply for workers' compensation–by whether received financial assistance

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[\[186.5 KB\]](#)

Table 11. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, selected characteristics–by main reason did not apply for workers' compensation

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Table 12. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, selected characteristics–by status of employment

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Table 13. Persons who experienced a work-related injury or illness, main reason for ceasing job where work-related injury or illness occurred–by sex

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Table 14. State or Territory of usual residence, populations

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All data cubes

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[587.03 KB]

Survey material

Work related injuries questionnaire (sample only)

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[438.04 KB]

History of changes

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27/09/2019 - Data Cube Table 3 under the Data downloads section was replaced. This replacement spreadsheet corrects errors in the estimation and proportion of Hours usually worked in job where most recent work-related injury or illness occurred by sex, reported in rows 17 to 25.

Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6324.0.

Methodology

[Work-related injuries methodology, July 2017 - June 2018](#)